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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to provide information on ensuring quality special education services and early intervention to building principals in elementary and middle schools. It sets forth standards of excellence that directly relate to implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and presents guidelines for principals to use when assessing themselves and their school community. It is intended that the standards and guidelines in this document be used to assess quality practices and program improvement. The guide is organized around the following categories: (1) school organization, which addresses the need for an adequate supply of qualified personnel; (2) leadership; (3) curriculum and instruction, which addresses student access to a high-quality curriculum, provision of adequate financial and material resources, and use of effective instructional practices; (4) staff development; (5) school climate, which addresses the need to ensure all children feel respected and welcome; and (6) assessment. For each section, standards are presented along with specific guidelines. Appendix A contains a checklist that principals or other stakeholders may use to assess the extent to which their schools meet the quality standards and guidelines. Appendix B includes excerpts from the text of the IDEA regulations referenced in the guide. (CR)

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Implementing IDEA

A Guide for Principals

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Implementing IDEA

A Guide for Principals

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[1]IDEA Local Implementation by Local Administrators Partnership
[2]Associations of Service Providers Implementing IDEA Reforms in Education Partnership, Families and Advocates Partnership for Education, The Policymaker Partnership

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The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) is a proud member of the ILIAD Partnership Project. ILIAD at the Council of Exceptional Children is a leadership initiative in partnership with the IDEA Partnership Projects: the Associations of Service providers Implementing IDEA Reforms in Education (ASPIIRE), the Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE), and the Policymaker Partnership (PMP).

The Council for Exceptional Children is proud to be a primary partner of the ILIAD Partnership Project, which involves educational and related services associations that are working together to provide needed information, ideas, and technical assistance to implement the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (IDEA '97). The development of this publication was supported by the ILIAD Partnership Project, which is funded by the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. All materials disseminated from this partnership have been reviewed by the Office of Special Education Programs.

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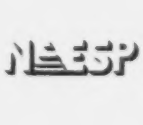
This document is available in alternative format, upon request—Braille, large print, and diskette.



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June 2001

Dear Colleague,

The *IDEA Local Implementation by Local Administrators (ILIAD)** Partnership Project based at the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and *The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)* are proud to announce a new publication, ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide For Principals***. Please accept the enclosed publication(s) as a complimentary gift from the ILIAD Partnership.

This easy-to-read guide was written for building principals in elementary and middle schools. The guide contains standards of excellence that were created by NAESP for its membership, however input on the content was received from school principals, administrators, and distinguished colleagues from several organizations across the nation. As a result, we feel that the publication will assist all school administrators in implementing IDEA '97 successfully.

This guide is just one of several products and services from the ILIAD Partnership to support school principals and administrators in understanding and effectively implementing IDEA '97.

We encourage you to share this publication with your colleagues. If you want additional copies, or if you have questions about any of ILIAD's products, services, or trainings, please contact the ILIAD staff at 877-232-4332 (toll-free), or e-mail us at ideapractices@cec.sped.org. This product can also be downloaded from our website at www.ideapractices.org.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Wood-Garnett

Stephanie Wood-Garnett
Project Director, ILIAD

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Foreword

In 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Public Law 105-17, was reauthorized and amended. The changes made to IDEA affect the way administrators, teachers, related services providers, early childhood educators, and parents go about the important work of providing quality education, special education and related services, and early intervention for children with disabilities.

The principal's role is critical to success as public schools strive to meet the challenge of implementing the new IDEA requirements. Through their leadership, principals can ensure that the school organization, climate, and staff development activities, as well as curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices reflect research on effective schooling and sound practice. In the context of IDEA, principals – along with other school staff members – also must make sure that school practices meet legal requirements.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), in collaboration with the IDEA Local Implementation by Local Administrators Partnership (ILIAD) project, has developed this document, ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals***, to provide guidance on ensuring quality special education services and early intervention to building principals in elementary and middle schools. ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals*** sets forth standards of excellence that directly relate to implementing IDEA and presents guidelines for principals to use when assessing themselves and their school community. It is intended that the standards and guidelines in this document be used to assess quality practices and guide program improvement.

The provision of special education, related services, and early intervention is considered integral to the total school program. Thus, this document is designed to be used in conjunction with other NAESP standards guides:

- *Standards for Quality Elementary and Middle Schools: Kindergarten Through Eighth Grade.*
- *Early Childhood Education and the Elementary School Principal: Standards for Quality Programs for Young Children.*

Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals supplements these previous documents by emphasizing the pivotal importance of building principals in ensuring that special education, related services, and early intervention are integrated and operationalized throughout the regular school program.

A final caveat: ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals*** provides a look at the new IDEA requirements in the context of quality standards and guidelines for principals. NAESP believes that the standards and guidelines in ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals*** – if implemented – will result in high quality special education, related services, and early intervention being provided to children with disabilities. However, ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals*** should not be viewed as a compliance guide. Indeed, there are many aspects of IDEA compliance that are not addressed in this document. Rather, this document is designed for use in assessing program quality and considering program improvement.

Development of the Book

Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals is a product of the IDEA Partnerships Project, which comprises four national projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to deliver a common message about the implementation of the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA. One of those partnerships is the ILIAD project at the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). NAESP is a partner in the ILIAD project.

As one of the ILIAD activities, NAESP in 1999 convened the IDEA Guidelines Committee, a group composed of elementary and middle school principals. The Guidelines Committee worked to generate content and reach consensus on standards for principals that reflected the provision of high quality special education, related services, and early intervention for children with disabilities. A draft was written and reviewed for consistency with federal law. A second draft was submitted for field review and for review to help ensure consistency with IDEA.

The work of the Guidelines Committee was directed by the following premises, espoused in previous NAESP documents. They are:

- A quality school program must respond to the needs of the individual children who attend that school.
- Quality guidelines should reflect the research on effective schools, the practical knowledge of principals in schools serving preschool through eighth grade children, and the insights of other professionals who work with children daily.
- Since quality schools do not exist in isolation from the rest of the community, ideas and opinions also should be solicited from other stakeholders who share an interest in the success of schools.

- Assessment and planning for improvement are most effective when they take place at the individual school.
- Quality schools recognize and value improved child performance and continually seek better ways of meeting the changing needs of their children and their communities.
- Quality elementary and middle schools may be organized and operated in different ways. However, quality schools share a set of basic characteristics, which form the core of the NAESP standards.

The present document is organized around the same categories identified in the general standards for quality elementary and middle schools. They are:

- School organization.
- Leadership.
- Curriculum and instruction.
- Staff development.
- School climate.
- Assessment.

In each section, the NAESP-developed standards and guidelines may be applied to all grades, including preschool aged children (aged three to five) who may be served in community-based settings (e.g., Head Start, child care, and preschool). Principals who choose to use them should view this document as extending the standards put forth in the other NAESP documents to the provision of special education, related services, and early intervention.

Two appendices are included that are designed to assist principals who choose to implement the NAESP-developed standards and guidelines. Appendix A contains a checklist that principals or other stakeholders may use to assess the extent to which their school meets the NAESP-developed quality standards and guidelines. [Note: These quality standards and guidelines were developed by NAESP and are not required by OSEP or the U.S. Department of Education.] Appendix B includes excerpts from the text of the IDEA regulations referenced in this guide.

NAESP believes that ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals*** will assist principals and their entire school communities in educating children with disabilities in their neighborhood schools and in partnership with early childhood community-based programs, as appropriate. We invite principals to use these standards and guidelines to strengthen their existing programs.

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Introduction

For more than two decades, principals have been meeting both the intent and the spirit of federal law as it relates to educating children with disabilities. They have been creating schools that welcome all children and hold high expectations for all children's learning and progress. The IDEA requirements present an opportunity for principals to continue to strengthen special education, related services, and early intervention for children with disabilities.

IDEA '97 states more emphatically than previous versions of the law that children with disabilities are full participants in the school program. High expectations are held for all children with disabilities. There is an explicit assumption that children with disabilities will participate and progress in the general education curriculum, as appropriate, and that preschool children will participate in appropriate activities. Additionally, it is assumed that children with disabilities will participate in extracurricular school-supported activities, and that they will learn and develop with their nondisabled peers. IDEA supports children's participation and progress by providing for special education and related services, supplementary aids and services either to the child or on behalf of the child, and program modifications or supports for school personnel.

Perhaps the most significant change in the new IDEA is the clarification of special education as a service and not a place. Special education is defined as specially designed instruction, provided at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings, and instruction in physical education. 34 C.F.R. §300.26. Special education includes each of the following if it is specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability: speech-language pathology services, or any other related service, if the service is

considered special education rather than a related service under state standards, travel training, and vocational education. Special education is intended to ensure access to the general education curriculum so that a child with a disability may profit from the educational standards that apply to all children.

In addition, IDEA mandates a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to begin at age three. In cases where elementary schools provide early childhood programs to nondisabled children, they also are required to provide early childhood special education and related services, supplementary supports, and aids to children aged three to five. In some cases, the school will partner with a community-based early childhood program (e.g., Head Start, child care, or preschool), in which case the principal's leadership must extend to that setting.

While elementary and middle schools utilize various configurations due to differing student needs, they all have in common the fact that special education and general education are part of the same system. Educating children with disabilities is a responsibility that is shared among all stakeholders. No one individual is expected to do this alone. Collaboration and shared responsibility require the creative use of all staff, as well as the understanding that the greater community (e.g., agencies, community-based programs, etc.) may partner in this effort.

To this end, it takes a strong instructional leader to ensure that all children achieve. It takes a strong instructional leader to ensure that all children and their teachers receive the supports and services they need to learn and develop. And, it takes a strong instructional leader to create a positive learning climate that embodies a unifying philosophy of respect for all children and all stakeholders in the total school community.

All issues in the school affect the principal, and all issues are affected by the principal. Therefore, the principal is the key to ensuring that all children participate and progress to the maximum extent possible. Principals must guarantee that the school addresses the diverse needs of children and their families through all major elements of the school, including:

- School organization.
- Curriculum and instruction.
- Staff development.
- School climate.
- Assessment.

On a daily basis, principals must demonstrate through leadership that they uphold and support the legal requirements of IDEA and that they expect promising, research-based proven practices related to educating children with disabilities to be used. Even in larger schools where principals share some responsibilities, they remain responsible for oversight and monitoring of the school program.

Principals who have been embracing an increasingly diverse population of children with disabilities for some time know that they play a central role in helping to guarantee that the changes in IDEA '97 will produce improved

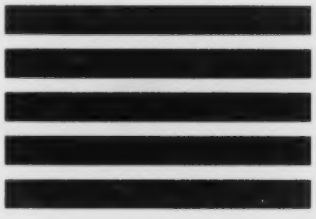
results for children with disabilities. To this end, ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals*** is offered as a tool for ensuring that all children with disabilities learn, and that principals have the supports they need to implement IDEA.

Resources

Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (2000). ***IDEA requirements for preschoolers with disabilities***. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

The Council for Exceptional Children (1998). ***IDEA 1997: Let's make it work***. Reston, VA: Author.

Organization



The organization of a quality elementary or middle school arises from the school's educational philosophy and is designed to meet the specific needs of its children. The organization of a school will impact upon the ease with which principals implement legal requirements and sound practices related to educating children with disabilities.

One major purpose of IDEA is to ensure that children with disabilities have access to a free appropriate public education that involves special education and related services designed to meet their individual and unique needs, and that ultimately prepares them for post-school activities. 34 C.F.R. §§300.13; 300.1. A free appropriate public education is available to all children with disabilities aged 3 through 21 residing in the State, including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school. 34 C.F.R. §§300.121(a); 300.132. Because services to preschoolers can be provided directly by the district or through contracts with other public or private entities, the principal should consider how the organization of those other community settings reflects the district's philosophy for excellence.

The following NAESP Standards of Excellence relate to organization. The discussion for each Standard focuses on relevant linkages to IDEA.

The school's shared beliefs, mission, and goals are clearly stated and implemented. These are developed cooperatively by school staff members and parents.

Schools must be responsive to the educational needs of all children, including children with disabilities. Responsiveness begins with ensuring that the school's beliefs, mission, and goals reflect all children in the school community. The administrator should review all statements – beliefs, mission, and goals – for consistency. For example, many schools have goal statements such as "all children will read at third grade level by the end of third grade"

– this may be an impossible goal for some children with disabilities.

Another example is the extent to which children with disabilities are included in school programs and activities. Children with disabilities must have opportunities to participate in the full range of school programs. IDEA requires that each public agency shall take steps to ensure that its children with disabilities have available to them the variety of educational programs and services available to nondisabled children in the area served by the agency, including art, music, industrial arts, consumer and homemaking education, and vocational education. 34 C.F.R. §300.305. Regular preschool and other early childhood programs also are examples. Thus, schools may need to revise and evaluate how well their mission statements and programs encompass all children.

Principals may increase their responsiveness by involving all stakeholders – community agency representatives, businesses, the faith community, youth recreation and advocacy groups – in the formulation and review of these statements. This includes any community providers – as in the case of community-based early childhood programs. At the very least, statements should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are still valid and that they address the entire child population.

Sufficient numbers of well-qualified personnel are provided to fulfill the school's goals. In quality schools, well-prepared professional personnel – along with well-supervised parent and community volunteers – ensure that child and program needs are met.

In our district, we don't have regular education children and special education children. We just have children!

Greg Robinson
Associate Superintendent, Urbandale, IA

The school should be appropriately staffed with qualified special education teachers – including early childhood special educators – and related service personnel and other professionals who serve children with disabilities. 34 C.F.R. §300.136. IDEA requires that states must establish entry-level requirements for the professions and disciplines that provide services under the IDEA. Principals need to advocate for the recruitment and retention of qualified staff. They need to be vocal in reminding the district of the need to maintain highly professional working environments and to provide sufficient incentives.

Principals may find it helpful to establish a working relationship with schools of education that prepare teachers for a career in special education. Encourage special education preservice teachers to complete their student teaching or other internship requirements in your school. This provides you with an opportunity to identify potential teachers, and allows for an exchange of ideas.

Richard Barbacane
Principal, Lancaster, PA

Principals need to be aware that the IDEA requires the state to have in effect a comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD). 34 C.F.R. §300.135. The CSPD is designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified special education, regular education, and related services personnel. 34 C.F.R. §§300.135(a)(1); 300.382. Check with the director of special education for your State to find out more about the CSPD.

While the actual hiring decision may be out of a principal's hands, he or she may still advocate for qualified professionals. During interviews with prospective candidates, principals may ask questions about whether special education topics and experiences were part of college coursework and practica. If a teacher is transferring from another district, questions may focus on his or her experiences with special education and related services.

My school participates with a local university in a unique teacher education program. My school district hires students pursuing a Masters degree in special education as paraprofessionals for a year while they complete their coursework. At the end of the year, the building principal can recommend the teacher candidate be offered an 'early hire' contract for the following year.

Stan Boren
Principal, Fairfax County, VA

Principals also can encourage all existing staff to develop or expand their knowledge and skills related to educating children with disabilities. This includes making current and relevant information available (e.g., see the ILIAD Partnership Project web site at **www.ideapractices.org**). It also may mean that everyone is clear about the various roles and responsibilities assumed by specific staff members.

There must be sufficient numbers of teachers, related service providers, and other personnel to provide quality services. The principal must ensure that all aspects of the school program are covered. For example, a need may arise for district itinerant early childhood special educators to be assigned to partner agencies in the community. It is imperative that principals share concerns about staffing needs with central administration.

As specialized services are provided to children with disabilities, the principal will need to supervise and evaluate new and varied personnel and services. Having an understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of these service providers will enhance the principal's ability to provide leadership.

Placement and grouping practices are determined by child needs.

IDEA may have an impact on the placement of a child with a disability in schools. The appropriate placement of a particular child with a disability under the IDEA, Part B cannot be determined until after decisions have been made about the child's needs and the services that the public agency will provide to meet those needs. These decisions must be made

at the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting, and it would not be permissible to first place the child and then develop the IEP. Therefore, the IEP must be developed before placement. Further, the child's placement must be based, among other factors, on the child's IEP. 34 C.F.R. §300.342(a)–(d).

This requirement does not preclude temporarily placing an eligible child with a disability in a program as part of the evaluation process – before the IEP is finalized – to assist a public agency in determining the appropriate placement for the child. However, it is essential that the temporary placement not become the final placement before the IEP is finalized. In order to ensure that this does not happen, the state might consider requiring local education agencies (LEA) to take the following actions:

1) Develop an interim IEP for the child that sets out the specific conditions and timelines for trial placement.

2) Ensure that the parents agree to the interim placement before it is carried out, and that they are invited to participate throughout the process of developing, reviewing, and revising the child's IEP.

3) Set a specific timeline (e.g., 30 days) for completing the evaluation, finalizing the IEP, and determining the appropriate placement for the child.

4) Conduct an IEP meeting at the end of the trial period in order to finalize the child's IEP. 34 C.F.R. §300.342(a)–(d).

Under Part B of the IDEA, each public agency is required to take steps to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities. 34 C.F.R. §300.306(a). This includes assemblies, afterschool programs, counseling services, health services, and special interest groups and clubs. 34 C.F.R. §300.306(b). Also, children with disabilities requiring transportation needs should not be excluded from participation in clubs or special interest groups that meet afterschool. Principals need to check the child's IEP for information related to issues such as transportation.

Sufficient time is allocated to accomplish the school's educational objectives. In quality schools, time is generally allotted to teachers for preparation and for staff development.

Time is an important variable that can assist principals in meeting children's needs. For example, the regular educator has important expertise regarding the general curriculum and the regular education environment. Time must be allocated for at least one regular education teacher to participate in IEP meetings if a child receives services or may potentially receive services in a regular education environment. 34 C.F.R. §300.344(a)(2). For a child aged three to five, the regular educator may be a teacher from the preschool program or community-based early childhood program (e.g., Head Start or child care).

IDEA requires that the regular education teacher, as a member of the IEP team, must – to the extent appropriate – participate in the development, review, and revision of the child's IEP. In addition, the following are some

of the requirements with respect to the involvement of regular education teachers. The regular education teacher should assist in the determination of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies for the child. The regular education teacher should provide assistance with the determination of the supplementary aids and services, program modifications, or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child. These supplementary aids and services, program modifications, or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child must be consistent with the IEP. The IEP must include a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child or on behalf of the child. The IEP also must include a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child to advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals of the IEP. Lastly, the regular education teacher should assist in the determination of the child's participation in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities. 34 C.F.R. §§300.346(d)(1) and (2), and 300.347(a)(3).

Because the regular education teacher may have a major role in implementing the child's program as described in the IEP, time also should be afforded for staff planning. In addition, if regular educators are to integrate services and supports into the classroom, then time should be available for them to plan with special educators, related service personnel, and itinerant early childhood special education providers as appropriate.

Time also should be afforded to the special education provider to meet with regular education colleagues. This includes teachers in community-based early childhood programs. Collaborative teaching between special and regular educators is becoming increasingly common and some principals encourage all teachers who work with the same child to meet periodically to share insights and plans. The scheduling of joint planning time is key to the success of such strategies.

> *Weekly meetings need to be built into the school's schedule for general education teachers and paraprofessionals to plan with special education and related service personnel. This collaboration provides important support for the classroom teacher.*
>
> Edward Jerome
> Principal, Edgartown, PA

Finally, principals must ensure that time issues related to parent participation – especially providing parents the opportunity to attend IEP meetings – are addressed. At the very least, principals should make sure that the schedule of IEP meetings is mutually agreed upon by the school staff and the parents (consistent with the requirements of IDEA). 34 C.F.R. §300.345(a),(c),(d)(1-3).

Each school has a full-time, qualified principal. The visible presence of a strong, effective principal who acts as the school's chief

executive officer generally is a key factor in school quality.

Administrators must be knowledgeable about all aspects of educational programs, including special education services. The principal oversees the school program that includes all children and interfaces with families. This makes knowledge about IDEA and promising practices essential.

Although IDEA does not require a principal to serve as a member of the IEP team, many do so. Generally, principals are qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specifically designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities. They also are knowledgeable about the general curriculum and the availability of school resources – at least two of the characteristics that IDEA requires of the school representative on the IEP team. 34 C.F.R. §300.344(a)(4)(i)–(iii).

Principals need an understanding of the law. They also need to know how IDEA impacts the entire school. My knowledge of special education has enabled me to hold high expectations of students, as well as of their teachers. My knowledge also has aided me in working with parents and in seeking resources in the community.

June Monterio
Principal, Annandale, VA

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

Following are specific guidelines for principals. While IDEA does not specify tasks that principals must perform, the guidelines support principals who have an organization in place that is designed to meet the needs of all children.

The school's shared beliefs, mission, and goals are clearly stated and implemented.

- Beliefs, mission statements, and goals clearly address all children, including children with disabilities.
- All stakeholders – including special education professionals, related service providers, early childhood providers, and parents and families of children with disabilities – are involved in the process of developing beliefs, mission statements, and goals.
- All beliefs, mission statements, and goals are consistent with IDEA legal standards.
- Beliefs, mission statements, and goals are disseminated to all stakeholders.

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

Sufficient numbers of well-qualified personnel are provided to fulfill the school's goals.

- The principal understands what constitutes qualified special education personnel and quality special education and related services.
- The principal understands what constitutes quality regular education personnel in the context of ensuring that children with disabilities participate and progress in the regular education curriculum.
- The principal accepts responsibility for hiring and/or recommending for hiring qualified special education and related service personnel.
- The principal advocates for sufficient numbers of special education and related service personnel to provide quality services to children with disabilities.
- The principal works with the district central office, as appropriate, to ensure an appropriate allocation of staff with regard to special education caseloads and class sizes.
- The principal ensures that all staff are knowledgeable about IDEA requirements and demonstrate effective instructional practices for children with disabilities.
- The principal ensures that roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals and related service professionals are clearly delineated with respect to their work with children with disabilities.
- The principal is responsible, along with the special education director, for allocating staff and other resources as required by the IEP and ensures that all services are provided as specified in the IEP.

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

Placement and grouping practices are determined by student needs.

- The principal ensures that all placement decisions are made by a placement group which includes the child's parent and the child, when appropriate.
- The principal understands that special education is not a place but a system of instruction and services designed to ensure an opportunity for a child with a disability to receive an appropriate education based on his or her needs.
- Principals in schools that partner with community-based early childhood programs ensure that children with disabilities in these programs receive an appropriate education based on their needs.
- The principal ensures that all children, including children with disabilities, are full participants in the school community.
- The principal implements procedures that are consistent with the overall intent of the IEP team.
- The principal is flexible in encouraging the IEP team to meet to discuss possible modifications to services and programs when needs arise – not just during an annual IEP review.
- The principal ensures that both regular and special educators share responsibility for the educational achievement of children with disabilities.

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

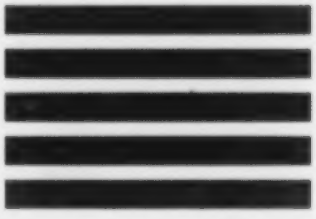
Sufficient time is allocated to accomplish the school's educational objectives.

- The principal ensures, to the extent possible, that staff – teachers, related service providers, early childhood educators – have sufficient time for planning and collaboration to address the needs of children with disabilities.
- The principal works with the LEA to ensure that regular education teachers – including early childhood teachers from community-based settings – have time to participate as appropriate in IEP team meetings.
- The principal ensures that all meetings – including IEP meetings – that involve parents and families are scheduled at times that facilitate the attendance of all members, including the parents.
- The principal develops – in collaboration with regular educators, special educators, and related service providers – instructional schedules that minimize disruptions in instruction for individual children.

Each school has a full-time, qualified principal.

- The principal is knowledgeable about IDEA requirements and effective special education and related services practices.
- The principal provides leadership in IEP development.
- The principal ensures that each child's IEP goals are monitored to ensure that they are being met.

Leadership



The principal is involved in every aspect of the school's operation and is, therefore, the primary figure in determining the school's quality and character. Principals in quality elementary and middle schools exhibit strong leadership capabilities.

Because the principal's own vision contributes to the overall vision of the school community, he or she is key to ensuring that children with disabilities learn and succeed. Thus, the leadership exhibited by the principal will greatly impact upon the ease with which the legal requirements of IDEA and sound practices related to educating children with disabilities are implemented.

The following NAESP Standards of Excellence relate to leadership. The discussion for each Standard focuses on relevant linkages to IDEA.

The principal's values, beliefs, and personal characteristics inspire people to accomplish the school's mission. The principal's responsibilities extend beyond the building into the surrounding community – to parents and families, community-based early childhood programs, civic leaders, the media, other administrators, and the school district's central administration.

Principals must be willing to model their beliefs. Care must be taken to ensure that all children are included in all aspects of the school's program. For example, IDEA requires that each public agency takes steps to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities. 34 C.F.R. §300.306(a).

This means that children with disabilities will be able to participate in nonacademic activities such as lunchroom, recess, and assemblies, as well as afterschool events and field trips.

Children with disabilities must be included in and interface with the entire school community. For example, when artwork is exhibited in local businesses or performances are given for civic groups, children with disabilities should have opportunities to participate with their nondisabled peers. In addition, the principal should model support among staff.

> *The motto of our school is* Expect the Best! *I have a bulletin board outside the office where teachers nominate a student's best work for display. 'Best' was defined in relation to the individual youngster. As a result, some papers were nominated that showed imperfections and others were nominated that appeared to be works in progress. But in all cases the papers represented the student's best effort at the time. For example, during the first week of school, a student with autism drew lines on a paper according to the general education teacher's guidelines. The work appeared to be just lines on the page, but it represented a major accomplishment for the child.*
>
> Greg Robinson
> Associate Superintendent, Urbandale, IA

The principal demonstrates skills that enable the school to reach its goals. Effective principals convey high expectations and recognize the importance of improving the quality of life for all children and staff members. They create a culture for learning that focuses on increasing child achievement and achieving program goals.

IDEA provides that children with disabilities receive a free, appropriate public education. 34 C.F.R. §§300.1(a); 300.13. The state also is required to establish goals for the performance of children with disabilities that are consistent, to the maximum extent appropriate, with other goals and standards for all children established by the state. 34 C.F.R. §300.137(a)(1)–(2). Principals, therefore, must be familiar with these goals, and believe that all children can learn.

Principals who are knowledgeable about IDEA and effective special education and related services practices will be able to use their expertise in promoting research-based approaches that support children with disabilities. Principals assist their staff in forming collaborative partnerships that address problems through prevention and supportive interventions. For children whose behavioral needs are challenging, principals should work with their staff to ensure that students are provided with appropriate services and positive behavioral supports. In general, effective principals guide their school personnel to use a repertoire of positive practices when responding to a child's behavior. They also have in place positive schoolwide approaches that help prevent problems and support the academic and behavioral progress of all children.

A principal should be aware of the full continuum of services, including family and child involvement, within the school to address the needs of children with disabilities. For example, principals may support prereferral

practices that enable children with disabilities to receive assistance before a minor problem develops into a more serious one.

To accomplish the school's mission, leadership must be a shared responsibility among all members of the school community. A quality school leader strives continuously to build consensus among staff members. Principals should bring people together to share a common vision about school.

Parents of children with disabilities must be included in planning their child's education. For example, principals must ensure that parents are not only present at each of their child's IEP meetings, but that they also have the opportunity to participate in the IEP process. 34 C.F.R. §300.345(a)(1)–(2) and (c)–(d). Some noteworthy examples of parent participation include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Membership on a child's IEP team must include the parents of the child. 34 C.F.R. §300.344(a)(1).
- Parents of a child with a disability have the right to include other persons who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel, on the IEP team as appropriate. 34 C.F.R. §300.344(a)(6).
- An IEP must state how and when the child's parents will be regularly informed (e.g., through such means as periodic report cards) of their child's progress in achieving goals set out in the IEP. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(7)(ii).
- Each public agency shall ensure that the parents of each child with a disability are members of any group that makes decisions on the educational placement of their child. 34 C.F.R. §300.501(c).
- Parents of a child with a disability must be notified a reasonable time before the public agency proposes to initiate or change, or refuses to initiate or change, the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of free, appropriate public education to the child. 34 C.F.R. §300.503(a)(1)(i)–(iii).

Principals can do much to enhance family involvement. A strong partnership with families is critical to the success of any child, and this partnership can be fostered through positive comments from the school principal.

> *Personal invitations to meet to discuss a child's progress rather than a child's transgressions can go a long way in helping a family feel comfortable interacting with the school. Or, calls home when parental dissatisfaction is suspected may turn around a potentially negative situation.*
>
> Michael Hipple
> Principal, New Berlinville, PA

The principal also should support the participation of staff members in planning the child's IEP. For example, the following individuals, in

addition to the parents, must serve on the IEP team. 34 C.F.R. §300.344(a)(1)–(7):

- At least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment).
- At least one special education teacher of the child, or if appropriate, at least one special education provider of the child.
- A representative of the public agency who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities and who is knowledgeable about the general curriculum, and who is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency.
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implication of evaluation results.
- The child, when appropriate.

We are fortunate to have a nice conference room where staff look forward to meeting to develop IEPs. We go out of our way to create a pleasing atmosphere. For example, we keep the room stocked with snacks.

Michael Hipple
Principal, New Berlinville, PA

- At the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child including related services personnel as appropriate.

Principals can do much to enhance participation of staff members in planning and implementing a child's IEP. For example, the principal might show support and demonstrate commitment by covering a class for a teacher who needs to attend an IEP team meeting.

Guidelines for Principals: Leadership

Following are specific guidelines for principals. While IDEA does not specify tasks that principals must perform, the guidelines support principals who assume leadership for all children in their buildings.

The principal's values, beliefs, and personal characteristics inspire people to accomplish the school's mission.

- The principal inspires everyone in the school community and provides leadership to special education and related services personnel based on an inclusive vision for the school.
- The principal assures that goals for special education and related services complement the mission and translate into practice.

The principal demonstrates skills that enable the school to reach its goals.

- The principal supports problem solving among all staff – including those who may be partners in providing community-based early childhood education – regarding difficult situations or individual children with disabilities who may require additional support.
- The principal exhibits leadership in school-based prereferral intervention processes and supports prevention efforts.
- The principal has knowledge and skills to create learning communities in his or her building, and in community-based settings where the school is partnering with other programs that are inclusive of all professionals and families.

Guidelines for Principals: Leadership

To accomplish the school's mission, leadership must be a shared responsibility among all members of the school community.

- The principal collaborates with the district special education director, relevant related services staff, and educators in community-based educational settings who provide early childhood programming and services for children with disabilities.
- Principals serve as mentors to new or less experienced administrators regarding special education and related services.
- The principal develops decision making processes and procedures that enable and encourage all staff to share ideas and solutions for improving special education and related services and increasing the achievement of children with disabilities.
- The principal develops a personal network of groups and agencies that provide information concerning effective leadership of special education programs.
- The principal builds relationships and supportive communication links with the community and the school.
- The principal ensures that parents are provided with information on all areas related to improving educational results for their child, including the use of assistive technology and positive behavioral supports.
- The principal collaborates with parents to provide meaningful information – in the native language of the parent, as appropriate – about special education and related services and their individual child's needs and services.
- The principal obtains input from parents regarding progress satisfaction that can be disaggregated by special education and other populations.

Curriculum and Instruction

The principal guides the instructional program toward the achievement of clearly defined curricular goals and objectives. The curriculum – developed by the staff with the active involvement of parents and community members – reflects the specific needs and values of the community, draws on research about how children with disabilities learn, and integrates the standards of professional subject area associations and core content as may be established by the state.

The school's curriculum and instructional program will affect the ease with which principals implement legal requirements and sound practices related to educating children with disabilities.

The following NAESP Standards of Excellence relate to curriculum and instruction. The discussion for each Standard focuses on relevant linkages to IDEA.

There is an established curriculum framework that provides direction for teaching and learning. There is a common core of learning that provides children with knowledge, skills, and understandings to function effectively in a global society. The curriculum framework outlines the instructional strategies and philosophies that will be used to teach all children. The curriculum is age appropriate and developmentally sound.

IDEA serves to assess special education and related services efforts and to ensure that these efforts meet the needs of children with disabilities. In addition, it is required that the state establish goals for the performance of children with disabilities that are consistent, to the extent possible, with the goals and standards established for all children. 34 C.F.R. §300.137(a)(1)–(2).

Children receiving special education and related services are required to receive instruction from the general curriculum content to the maximum

extent appropriate. 34 C.F.R.§300.26(b)(3)(ii). IEPs must include measurable annual goals that, with accommodations and modifications, will most appropriately allow them to participate and progress in the general curriculum. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(2)(i). A child's IEP also must include how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(1)(i)–(ii). [Note: These new IEP requirements are in addition to other requirements. Principals should consult the IDEA regulations or their special education director for a complete description of all IEP requirements.]

The common core of learning is supported by adequate financial and material resources. The principal, along with the special education director, assumes leadership in the identification, acquisition, and allocation of resources required to support the instructional program.

IDEA requires that necessary supports, aids, and services be provided to the child with a disability in accordance with the IEP. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(3). Any instructional or assessment modifications that are required for the child with a disability to participate in the assessment must be provided in accordance with the content of the IEP. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(5).

Principals must ensure that special education teachers possess the same texts, teacher's manuals, and other curriculum materials as regular education teachers to allow children with disabilities access to the general education curriculum. Principals should encourage the purchase of materials and the development of units of study that are accessible to all children. Keeping in mind that any service or aid specified in the IEP must be made available to the child, 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(3); 300.350(a)(1), principals should continue to seek opportunities for enriching and enhancing the educational program. While this may prove a daunting task – especially in districts where dollars are tight – principals, along with special education directors, should continue to advocate for money to increase services for all students. Some principals have been successful in obtaining materials and resources through grants and subgrants from the state.

Effective instructional practices are essential to accomplishing the school's mission. The entire staff is committed to providing opportunities for success to all children, regardless of special needs.

The principal and staff are committed to the concept that all children can learn, though not necessarily in the same way or at the same time. The principal understands the need to educate the public to the fact that this does not mean lowering standards.

IDEA provides guidance on how to provide effective instructional services for children with disabilities. For example, the IEP will state the services, supports, and aids that the child requires to participate and progress in the general curriculum. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(3)(i)–(iii). Principals should be knowledgeable about such approaches and ensure that all instructional staff are fully prepared to implement them.

Principals should be aware that each public agency is responsible for ensuring that

assistive technology devices or assistive technology services, or both, as those terms are defined in §300.5–300.6, are made available to a child with a disability if required as part of the child's special education, related services, or supplementary aids and services, as stated in that child's IEP.

On a case-by-case basis, the use of school-purchased assistive technology devices in a child's home or in other settings is required if the child's IEP team determines that the child needs access to those devices in order to receive a free, appropriate public education. 34 C.F.R. §300.308(a)–(b); §300.5; §300.5.

Securing assistive technology is only part of the solution. Professional development on using the technology devices and services is essential for the process to be complete.

John Crossan
Principal, Boyertown, PA

Guidelines for Principals: Curriculum and Instruction

Following are specific guidelines for principals. While IDEA does not specify tasks that principals must perform, the guidelines support principals who assume leadership for guiding the instructional program toward achievement for all children.

There is an established curriculum framework that provides direction for teaching and learning.

- The principal ensures that all children have access to a high-quality curriculum.
- The principal ensures that all individuals responsible for services stated in an individual child's IEP understand them and are fully aware of how the IEP goals relate to the general education curriculum.
- The principal is knowledgeable of curricular domains or critical skill areas identified for a child in his or her IEP.
- The principal ensures that the common core of learning includes understanding and acceptance of individual differences and abilities.
- The principal ensures that required and effective transition practices are in place to assist children with disabilities in making the transition from early childhood programs to elementary schools and from elementary to middle schools.
- The principal ensures that appropriate primary school staff are familiar with early childhood services and programs – both within the school and in the community – and the services that may be provided to young children through IEPs or Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs).
- The principal ensures that formal transition planning begins for children during the middle school years. Transition services planning for each student with a disability begins at age 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team).

Guidelines for Principals: Curriculum and Instruction

The common core of learning is supported by adequate financial and material resources.

- The principal, along with the special education director, ensures that children with disabilities have the necessary level of support and materials to ensure equal access to the general curriculum.
- The principal ensures that special education teachers and children with disabilities are considered in all decisions regarding adoption or purchase of curricular materials.
- The principal makes sure that curricular materials and other resources have effectiveness data for children with disabilities and other special populations.
- The principal ensures, to the extent possible, the purchase of materials that are accessible to all children.
- The principal works with the special education director to advocate for sufficient resources that support high-quality instruction of children with disabilities in the common core of learning.
- The principal works closely with the district special education director to make maximum use of all learning resources.

Guidelines for Principals: Curriculum and Instruction

Effective instructional practices are essential to accomplishing the school's mission.

- The principal ensures that all teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and approaches that have been proven effective in educating all children, including students with disabilities.
- The principal ensures that there is adequate instructional time for children with disabilities to access and progress in the general education curriculum and to meet other IEP goals.
- The principal understands the role of assistive technology and services in supporting instruction of children with disabilities and works with the LEA to ensure that the necessary assistive technology is available and used in instruction.
- The principal ensures that any teacher or instructional assistant who provides instruction to an individual child with a disability is fully informed about and is fully able to deliver that child's required supports, services, and accommodations, as outlined in the child's IEP.
- The principal ensures that accommodations and modifications are provided to an individual child during assessment and classroom instruction, as provided in the child's IEP.
- The principal ensures that classroom instruction supports positive behaviors.
- The principal ensures that effective, positive behavioral supports and interventions are available to all children, including children with disabilities.

Staff Development

Staff development is the key to effective teaching and improved child performance. Quality staff development is a priority for all instructional staff who have an impact on child learning – including regular education teachers, paraprofessionals, special educators, and related service providers.

The principal ensures that everyone – including instructional staff, related service providers, paraprofessionals, support and clerical staff, and volunteers – is prepared to assist children with disabilities in achieving high standards. Staff development is a major tool principals can use to ensure that legal requirements and sound practices related to educating children with disabilities are implemented effectively.

The following Standards of Excellence relate to staff development. The discussion for each Standard focuses on relevant linkages to IDEA.

An effective staff development program, designed to further the school's mission and goals, is in place. Staff members share the responsibility for planning and implementing a program that meets the needs of all learners and introduces concepts proven to increase child learning. The principal ensures that staff members are prepared to assist children with disabilities to achieve high standards.

Principals should include special education teachers – and all community-based early childhood educators who are partnering with the school – in all regular education staff development. In addition, principals should ensure that, when possible, staff development addresses the needs of special educators – such as how to make adaptations for children with disabilities in order for children with disabilities to access the general education curriculum, and how to include preschool aged children with disabilities in developmentally appropriate activities.

Regular education teachers should be included in some special education staff development sessions. Regular education teachers should know why certain practices, such as medication programs, positive behavioral support, social work, school psychology, and early intervention are recommended and used. Such sessions can be informal. For example, some principals provide opportunities at weekly meetings for all teachers to talk about what is going on in their classrooms. During these meetings, teachers share innovations, successes, and failures and have opportunities to exchange information about instructional adaptations that they use with all children, including children with disabilities.

The staff recognizes the need for continuing professional development activities that promote personal growth. Principals provide incentives and motivation to encourage staff members to engage in high quality staff development. Districts that provide high quality professional growth opportunities often find higher morale and improved teaching and learning – which has been linked to greater rates of staff retention.

Programming for success means that every teacher understands and supports the IEP process. This requires intense training and monitoring. As a principal, I make sure that all teachers are trained during our summer retreat. Follow-up is conducted at weekly team meetings during the school year and on the system wide staff development days. Training is conducted by parents, service providers, and supervisors. Mentor teachers assist beginning teachers throughout the year. We also provide IEP coaches to guide IEP development and implementation.

Marian White-Hood
Principal, Upper Marlboro, MD

The special education teachers on my staff collaborate with the grade level teams at our host school to provide all students with the best educational opportunities. Through collaboration, teachers are developing an understanding of the accommodations that their children need to succeed in the general education curriculum.

Stan Boren
Principal, Fairfax County, VA

Principals may assist staff members in developing their knowledge about special education and related services and teaching children with disabilities. In addition to providing a high quality staff development program in the school, principals may encourage staff members to pursue knowledge and skills through other means. For example, a principal may encourage teachers to include special education related studies as part of their personal growth plan. A school faculty may adopt a topic that is relevant to many children, including children with disabilities, (e.g., positive behavioral support) as their focus for the year.

As we began to implement the requirements in IDEA '97, I made sure that my entire staff received high quality professional development from national experts. After the training, staff members formed study teams and selected specific topical areas to pursue in greater depth. This provided an opportunity for staff members to apply their new learnings to the needs of our students and school community.

Jan Funk
Principal, Fairfax County, VA

In addition, a principal may provide incentives to staff members who wish to develop their knowledge and skills related to serving children with disabilities. Release time may be given to attend conferences, meet with special education personnel, observe colleagues' classrooms, or learn a new piece of assistive technology. Funds may be used to purchase staff development packages, to provide substitutes to free up planning time, and for conference registrations.

I set aside time during staff meetings for professional development. This allows me the opportunity to bring in individuals with expertise in special education to review new ideas and strategies, and to answer questions from the entire staff.

Richard Barbacane
Principal, Lancaster, PA

Principals also should model their commitment to expanding the knowledge base in special education and related services by attending special education conferences, taking coursework, and inviting specialists to make presentations to school staff members. Principals may share their new information with staff members in public meetings.

Guidelines for Principals: Staff Development

Following are specific guidelines for principals. While IDEA does not specify tasks that principals must perform, the guidelines support principals who assume leadership for continually improving staff skills and knowledge about how best to assist children with disabilities to achieve high standards.

An effective staff development program, designed to further the school's mission and goals, is in place.

- Staff development prepares regular and special education teachers, related service professionals, early childhood educators, and paraprofessionals to collaborate in planning, instruction, and evaluation of children with disabilities.
- The principal ensures that professional development activities reflect the principles of effective practice.
- The principal utilizes ongoing professional development to understand special education and related services.

Guidelines for Principals: Staff Development

The staff recognizes the need for continuing professional development activities that promote personal growth.

- The principal ensures that information on special education and related services is available and accessible to staff members, and encourages them to take advantage of that material.
- The principal encourages staff members to take part in professional development that will expand and enhance their skills in and knowledge of working with diverse learners, including children with disabilities.
- The principal encourages staff, especially special education staff, to join and become active members of professional associations concerned with the education of children with disabilities.
- The principal has knowledge of information sources pertaining to the instruction of children with disabilities.
- The principal ensures time for special and regular educators, related service providers, early childhood educators, and paraprofessionals to participate together in professional development.

School Climate

School climate may be defined as the qualities of a school that affect the attitudes, behavior, and achievement of the individuals involved in its operation – children, staff, parents, and members of the community. In quality schools, staff members and children care for, respect, and trust one another.

The principal ensures a positive climate for all children and all staff. School climate will impact upon the ease with which principals implement legal requirements and sound practices related to educating children with disabilities.

The following Standards of Excellence are at the core of all efforts.

The school's environment encourages the capabilities and emphasizes the worth of individuals. To achieve this Standard, the principal provides leadership that ensures that all children and all staff respect and demonstrate caring for each other, develop academically and socially, and experience a high level of morale in the school. The direction of the principal is critical to creating a school climate in which children's needs are recognized and met equitably.

At times, some groups of children (e.g., males, minorities, limited English proficient children) are significantly overrepresented in certain special education categories (e.g., mental retardation, emotional disturbance). The principal should study the population of children who have been found eligible for special education and related services to determine the existence of any disproportionality. If areas of concern are evident, a review and analysis of procedures used to determine initial eligibility, placement, services, and exit criteria should be conducted.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that children have access to and feel good about participating in all school academic and extracurricular ac-

tivities. IDEA regulations require that an IEP include a statement of any individual modifications and a statement of the special education and related services the child with a disability will receive to enable participation as appropriate in the general curriculum, as well as in extracurricular and nonacademic activities in which nondisabled children participate. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(3). The IEP also must state measurable annual goals related to the child's progress in the general curriculum – or, in the case of a preschooler, related to the child's participation in appropriate activities. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(2).

It goes without saying that the principal must be concerned with creating a positive school climate. In the context of the IDEA this means being fully cognizant of all requirements related to working with children with challenging behaviors. This suggests a solid relationship with the director of special education to ensure a smooth implementation of all requirements such as:

- The role of the IEP team in determining strategies and positive behavioral interventions.
- How and when a change in placement as a result of behavior may occur.
- When a behavioral management plan is required.

The principal should ensure that all school members (e.g., faculty, staff, and children) acknowledge and respect each child for his or her progress and achievement of personal best. Public displays of respect and acknowledgment should extend to all children. For example, all children should have opportunities to display their work, artwork, and accomplishments.

The principal should be aware of related service providers who work with children with disabilities in the school. All service providers should be aware that they are expected to know and follow the school's codes. Principals may support this process by making orientations available to all related services staff and community agency representatives who provide services in the school building. This extends to service providers in community-based early childhood settings that are

As a school community, we decided to open a family center in our school to provide a place for parents to drop in or to attend scheduled events and programs aimed toward meeting their specific needs. The family center was organized by a committee of parents and teachers and staffed by parents with the support of our literacy teacher. The family center offered a variety of programs, including GED classes, parenting workshops, parents as tutors workshops, and preschool story hours. Other sessions included grandparents as care-givers (NAESP's Apple of Your Eye *program); understanding IEPs; and coffee with the principal. The family center supported a family-friendly climate at our school.*

Jim Brown
former principal, Coventry, RI

Innovative thinking, personal accountability, total involvement, motivation, and resource utilization are imperatives that come to mind when I think of my role in shaping a positive climate that supports IDEA. As principal, I must be committed to ensuring that all stakeholders – teachers, related service providers, and family members – are involved in productive and satisfying ways.

Marian White-Hood
Principal, Upper Marlboro, MD

partnering with the school.

Among its many purposes, the IDEA provides that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected. 34 C.F.R. §300.1(b). Parent involvement in all aspects of their child's educational experience will go a long way toward fostering positive relationships with teachers and principals.

Guidelines for Principals: School Climate

Following are specific guidelines for principals. While IDEA does not specify tasks that principals must perform, the guidelines support principals who assume leadership for continually encouraging a climate that recognizes and encourages the worth of all individuals.

The school's environment encourages the capabilities and emphasizes the worth of all individuals.

- The principal ensures that all children and families feel respected and welcome in the school, even if children come from outside the school's attendance zone or if they are participating in community-based programs.
- The principal ensures that all school staff members feel respected.
- The principal is responsible for ensuring access for all children with disabilities to any school-sponsored program outside the typical instructional day (clubs, sports, tutorials).
- The principal sets the tone and establishes a climate of respect for diverse populations.
- The principal demonstrates and encourages practices that respect children's cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
- The principal ensures that the contributions of all children, including children with disabilities, are acknowledged.
- The principal supports self-determination and advocacy for children with disabilities.
- The principal oversees all service providers who are in the school and collaborates with community-based service providers.

Assessment

A principal continually assesses school programs, child achievement, and staff performance. Assessment is an ongoing process for determining whether goals are being achieved and expectations met. The principal promotes effective, realistic assessment procedures that ensure valid and appropriate information about children with disabilities and their programs.

The following Standards of Excellence relate to assessment. The discussion for each Standard focuses on relevant linkages to IDEA.

Assessment data are used to improve the school's program. In a quality school, a variety of assessment techniques are used.

All children should be included in assessment programs and their data should be used for school improvement purposes. To ensure a student's program is meeting his or her needs, the principal should oversee all information about the child and his or her program. For example, the IEP must include how the child's parents will be regularly informed (through such means as periodic report cards) – at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled children's progress – of their child's progress toward the annual goals, and to the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(7). Part B of the IDEA does not require or prohibit states from disaggregating assessment results by disability category in reporting results to the public; this is a matter that is left to the state. 34 C.F.R. §300.139.

IDEA requires children with disabilities to participate in general state and district-wide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations if necessary as determined by the IEP team. A small number of children may need to participate through alternate assessments in accordance with guidelines that are predetermined. 34 C.R.F. §300.138. The performance results of children with disabilities shall be reported to the public just as perfor-

mance results are reported for all children, so long as the reporting method will not result in identifying the performance of individual children. 34 C.R.F. §300.139. Principals should understand that it is important to report the scores of children with disabilities so they are included in reform efforts and so they are able to demonstrate performance in the general education curriculum.

The district became involved in a goal tracking program that was used for progress monitoring. Each fall, teachers code student goals. At the annual review, the IEP team must answer questions about each goal, such as progress, level of discrepancy, level of independence, and status. These data are collected at the end of each semester and reports are provided to central office administrators, building principals, and special education teachers. The process helps us plan approaches to improve progress.

Greg Robinson
Associate Superintendent, Urbandale, IA

It is important to explain to the community and staff members why including children with disabilities in large-scale assessments is not only the law, but also is sound educational practice. All data and information should be reviewed by the principal or a member of the administrative team and used, when appropriate, for program improvement efforts.

Student assessment is based on achievement of objectives defined in the common core of learning. Assessment procedures are congruent with curriculum and instructional programs. It is clear what all children are expected to know and be able to do.

Evaluation and assessment are important aspects of a child's IEP. Principals should oversee all assessments of the student's school performance.

If a child receiving special education and related services takes a state or district-wide test, a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in the assessment must be stated in that student's IEP. 34 C.F.R. §300.347(a)(5). Principals should serve as resources to ensure large-scale assessments are reasonable for individual children with disabilities.

A fair and systematic procedure is followed for the assessment of all staff members. Staff members know the criteria by which they will be assessed. Assessment instruments are fair and valid.

The principal should be knowledgeable about special education and related services so that he or she can provide a thorough assessment of all staff members' performance.

Guidelines for Principals: Assessment

Following are specific guidelines for principals. While IDEA does not specify tasks that principals must perform, the guidelines support principals who assume leadership for continually assessing school programs, child achievement, and staff performance.

Assessment data are used to improve the school's program.

- The principal ensures that assessments measure all relevant aspects of children's performance results and guide overall school improvement.
- The principal is a resource in the implementation of large-scale assessment and accountability procedures.
- The principal works with the district to ensure that the results of assessments are disaggregated where required by the state.

Student assessment is based on achievement of objectives defined in the common core of learning.

- The principal ensures that teachers understand and use assessment information to improve their instruction.
- The principal is aware of the purpose and use of various assessment modifications and alternate assessments that might be used for children with disabilities.
- The principal is aware that parents of children with disabilities should receive progress reports at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled children's progress, of their child's progress toward the annual goals and the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year.
- The principal is aware of all assessment requirements associated with screening and evaluation of children suspected of having a disability.

Guidelines for Principals: Assessment

A fair and systematic procedure is followed for the assessment of all staff members.

- The principal implements fair and comprehensive evaluations of all special education and related services staff.

Appendix A

Guidelines for Principals

The checklist on the following pages is intended to guide the review of each of the quality standards and guidelines for principals included in ***Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals***.

Respondents are asked to identify the extent to which each of the quality indicators is evident within the school, according to the following scale:

- Always evident.
- Usually evident.
- Seldom evident.
- Not evident.

Specific definitions for these terms should be determined through consensus among those individuals using the checklist.

In most cases, individuals using the checklist will find ready evidence of quality as they move through the school, classrooms, and community-based settings in which the school is partnering. However, some quality indicators may require visits with the principal, teachers, related service providers, early childhood special educators, children, and/or parents to gain the required information, understanding, or evidence to make an accurate response.

In completing the checklist it is important that the "comments or suggestions" section of each page be used to record specific information or perceptions that influenced the manner in which the guidelines were checked. After completing the checklist for each standard, use this space again to identify and prioritize specific actions that might be taken relative to areas where improvement is needed.

Use the information from this checklist to begin planning for improvement.

The school's shared beliefs, mission, and goals are clearly stated and implemented.

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
Beliefs, mission statements, and goals clearly address all children, including children with disabilities.				
All stakeholders – including special education professionals, related service providers, early childhood providers, and parents and families of children with disabilities – are involved in the process of developing beliefs, mission statements, and goals.				
All beliefs, mission statements, and goals are consistent with IDEA legal standards.				
Beliefs, mission statements, and goals are disseminated to all stakeholders.				

Sufficient numbers of well-qualified personnel are provided to fulfill the school's goals.

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal understands what constitutes qualified special education personnel and quality special education and related services.				
The principal understands what constitutes quality regular education personnel in the context of ensuring that children with disabilities participate and progress in the regular education curriculum.				
The principal accepts responsibility for hiring and/or recommending for hiring qualified special education and related service personnel.				
The principal advocates for sufficient numbers of special education and related service personnel to provide quality services to children with disabilities.				
The principal works with the district central office, as appropriate, to ensure an appropriate allocation of staff with regard to special education caseloads and class sizes.				
The principal ensures that all staff are knowledgeable about IDEA requirements and demonstrate effective instructional practices for children with disabilities.				
The principal ensures that roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals and related service professionals are clearly delineated with respect to their work with children with disabilities.				
The principal is responsible, along with the special education director, for allocating staff and other resources as required by the IEP and ensures that all services are provided as specified in the IEP.				

Placement and grouping practices are determined by student needs.

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal ensures that all placement decisions are made by a placement group which includes the child's parent and the child, when appropriate.				
The principal understands that special education is not a place but a system of instruction and services designed to ensure an opportunity for a child with a disability to receive an appropriate education based on his or her needs.				
Principals in schools that partner with community-based early childhood programs ensure that children with disabilities in these programs receive an appropriate education based on their needs.				
The principal ensures that all children, including children with disabilities, are full participants in the school community.				
The principal implements procedures that are consistent with the overall intent of the IEP team.				
The principal is flexible in encouraging the IEP team to meet to discuss possible modifications to services and programs when needs arise – not just during an annual IEP review.				
The principal ensures that both regular and special educators share responsibility for the educational achievement of children with disabilities.				

Sufficient time is allocated to accomplish the school's educational objectives.

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal ensures, to the extent possible, that staff – teachers, related service providers, early childhood educators – have sufficient time for planning and collaboration to address the needs of children with disabilities.				
The principal works with the LEA to ensure that regular education teachers – including early childhood teachers from community-based settings – have time to participate as appropriate in IEP team meetings.				
The principal ensures that all meetings – including IEP meetings – that involve parents and families are scheduled at times that facilitate the attendance of all members, including the parents.				
The principal develops – in collaboration with regular educators, special educators, and related service providers – instructional schedules that minimize disruptions in instruction for individual children.				

Each school has a full-time, qualified principal.

Guidelines for Principals: Organization

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal is knowledgeable about IDEA requirements and effective special education and related services practices.				
The principal provides leadership in IEP development.				
The principal ensures that each child's IEP goals are monitored to ensure that they are being met.				

The principal's values, beliefs, and personal characteristics inspire people to accomplish the school's mission.

Guidelines for Principals: Leadership

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal inspires everyone in the school community and provides leadership to special education and related services personnel based on an inclusive vision for the school.				
The principal assures that goals for special education and related services complement the mission and translate into practice.				

The principal demonstrates skills that enable the school to reach its goals.

Guidelines for Principals: Leadership

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal supports problem solving among all staff – including those who may be partners in providing community-based early childhood education – regarding difficult situations or individual children with disabilities who may require additional support.				
The principal exhibits leadership in school-based prereferral intervention processes and supports prevention efforts.				
The principal has knowledge and skills to create learning communities in his or her building, and in community-based settings where the school is partnering with other programs that are inclusive of all professionals and families.				

To accomplish the school's mission, leadership must be a shared responsibility among all members of the school community.

Guidelines for Principals: Leadership

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal collaborates with the district special education director, relevant related services staff, and educators in community-based educational settings who provide early childhood programming and services for children with disabilities.				
Principals serve as mentors to new or less experienced administrators regarding special education and related services.				
The principal develops decision making processes and procedures that enable and encourage all staff to share ideas and solutions for improving special education and related services and increasing the achievement of children with disabilities.				
The principal develops a personal network of groups and agencies that provide information concerning effective leadership of special education programs.				
The principal builds relationships and supportive communication links with the community and the school.				
The principal ensures that parents are provided with information on all areas related to improving educational results for their child, including the use of assistive technology and positive behavioral supports.				
The principal collaborates with parents to provide meaningful information – in the native language of the parent, as appropriate – about special education and related services and their individual child's needs and services.				
The principal obtains input from parents regarding progress satisfaction that can be disaggregated by special education and other populations.				

There is an established curriculum framework that provides direction for teaching and learning.

Guidelines for Principals: Curriculum & Instruction

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal ensures that all children have access to a high-quality curriculum.				
The principal ensures that all individuals responsible for services stated in an individual child's IEP understand them and are fully aware of how the IEP goals relate to the general education curriculum.				
The principal is knowledgeable of curricular domains or critical skill areas identified for a child in his or her IEP.				
The principal ensures that the common core of learning includes understanding and acceptance of individual differences and abilities.				
The principal ensures that required and effective transition practices are in place to assist children with disabilities in making the transition from early childhood programs to elementary schools and from elementary to middle schools.				
The principal ensures that appropriate primary school staff are familiar with early childhood services and programs – both within the school and in the community – and the services that may be provided to young children through IEPs or Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs).				
The principal ensures that formal transition planning begins for children during the middle school years. Transition services planning for each student with a disability begins at age 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team).				

The common core of learning is supported by adequate financial and material resources.

Guidelines for Principals: Curriculum & Instruction

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal, along with the special education director, ensures that children with disabilities have the necessary level of support and materials to ensure equal access to the general curriculum.				
The principal ensures that special education teachers and children with disabilities are considered in all decisions regarding adoption or purchase of curricular materials.				
The principal makes sure that curricular materials and other resources have effectiveness data for children with disabilities and other special populations.				
The principal ensures, to the extent possible, the purchase of materials that are accessible to all children.				
The principal works with the special education director to advocate for sufficient resources that support high-quality instruction of children with disabilities in the common core of learning.				
The principal works closely with the district special education director to make maximum use of all learning resources.				

Effective instructional practices are essential to accomplishing the school's mission.

Guidelines for Principals: Curriculum & Instruction

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal ensures that all teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and approaches that have been proven effective in educating all children, including students with disabilities.				
The principal ensures that there is adequate instructional time for children with disabilities to access and progress in the general education curriculum and to meet other IEP goals.				
The principal understands the role of assistive technology and services in supporting instruction of children with disabilities and works with the LEA to ensure that the necessary assistive technology is available and used in instruction.				
The principal ensures that any teacher or instructional assistant who provides instruction to an individual child with a disability is fully informed about and is fully able to deliver that child's required supports, services, and accommodations, as outlined in the child's IEP.				
The principal ensures that accommodations and modifications are provided to an individual child during assessment and classroom instruction, as provided in the child's IEP.				
The principal ensures that classroom instruction supports positive behaviors.				
The principal ensures that effective, positive behavioral supports and interventions are available to all children, including children with disabilities.				

An effective staff development program, designed to further the school's mission and goals, is in place.

Guidelines for Principals: Staff Development

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
Staff development prepares regular and special education teachers, related service professionals, early childhood educators, and paraprofessionals to collaborate in planning, instruction, and evaluation of children with disabilities.				
The principal ensures that professional development activities reflect the principles of effective practice.				
The principal utilizes ongoing professional development to understand special education and related services.				

The staff recognizes the need for continuing professional development activities that promote personal growth.

Guidelines for Principals: Staff Development

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal ensures that information on special education and related services is available and accessible to staff members, and encourages them to take advantage of that material.				
The principal encourages staff members to take part in professional development that will expand and enhance their skills in and knowledge of working with diverse learners, including children with disabilities.				
The principal encourages staff, especially special education staff, to join and become active members of professional associations concerned with the education of children with disabilities.				
The principal has knowledge of information sources pertaining to the instruction of children with disabilities.				
The principal ensures time for special and regular educators, related service providers, early childhood educators, and paraprofessionals to participate together in professional development.				

The school's environment encourages the capabilities and emphasizes the worth of all individuals.

Guidelines for Principals: School Climate

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal ensures that all children and families feel respected and welcome in the school, even if children come from outside the school's attendance zone or if they are participating in community-based programs.				
The principal ensures that all school staff members feel respected.				
The principal is responsible for ensuring access for all children with disabilities to any school-sponsored program outside the typical instructional day (clubs, sports, tutorials).				
The principal sets the tone and establishes a climate of respect for diverse populations.				
The principal demonstrates and encourages practices that respect children's cultural and ethnic backgrounds.				
The principal ensures that the contributions of all children, including children with disabilities, are acknowledged.				
The principal supports self-determination and advocacy for children with disabilities.				
The principal oversees all service providers who are in the school and collaborates with community-based service providers.				

Assessment data are used to improve the school's program.

Guidelines for Principals: Assessment

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal ensures that assessments measure all relevant aspects of children's performance results and guide overall school improvement.				
The principal is a resource in the implementation of large-scale assessment and accountability procedures.				
The principal works with the district to ensure that the results of assessments are disaggregated where required by the state.				

Student assessment is based on achievement of objectives defined in the common core of learning.

Guidelines for Principals: Assessment

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal ensures that teachers understand and use assessment information to improve their instruction.				
The principal is aware of the purpose and use of various assessment modifications and alternate assessments that might be used for children with disabilities.				
The principal is aware that parents of children with disabilities should receive progress reports at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled children's progress, of their child's progress toward the annual goals and the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year.				
The principal is aware of all assessment requirements associated with screening and evaluation of children suspected of having a disability.				

A fair and systematic procedure is followed for the assessment of all staff members.

Guidelines for Principals: Assessment

GUIDELINES	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident
The principal implements fair and comprehensive evaluations of all special education and related services staff.				

Appendix B

IDEA Regulations Cited in Text

This document represents informal guidance; however, the regulations upon which it is based are binding on public agencies receiving funds under Part B. Therefore, the statute and regulations which constitute the legal authority for this document – 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq. and 34 C.F.R. §Part 300 – should be used for citation purposes.

§300.1 Purposes.

The purposes of this part are –

(a) To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free, appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living;

(b) To ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected; ...

§300.5 Assistive technology device.

As used in this part, Assistive technology device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

§300.6 Assistive technology service.

As used in this part, Assistive technology service means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. The term includes –

(a) The evaluation of the needs of a child with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child's customary environment;

(b) Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by children with disabilities;

(c) Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;

(d) Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;

(e) Training or technical assistance for a child with a disability or, if appropriate, that child's family; and

(f) Training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education or rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of that child.

§300.13 Free appropriate public education.

As used in this part, the term free appropriate public education or FAPE means special education and related services that –

(a) Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge;

(b) Meet the standards of the SEA, including the requirements of this part;

(c) Include preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the State; and

(d) Are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP) that meets the requirements of §§300.340-300.350.

§300.23 Qualified personnel.

As used in this part, the term qualified personnel means personnel who have met SEA-approved or SEA-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the area in which the individuals are providing special education or related services.

§300.26 Special education.

(a) General. (1) As used in this part, the term special education means specially-designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including –

(i) Instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and

(ii) Instruction in physical education....

(3) Specially-designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction-

(i) To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and

(ii) To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children....

§300.121 Free appropriate public education (FAPE).

(c) FAPE for children beginning at age three.

(1) Each State shall ensure that –

(i) The obligation to make FAPE available to each eligible child residing in the state begins no later than the child's third birthday; and

(ii) An IEP or IFSP is in effect for the child by that date...

(2) If a child's third birthday occurs during the summer, the child's IEP team shall determine the date when services under the IEP or IFSP will begin.

§300.132 Transition of children from Part C to preschool programs.

The State must have on file with the Secretary policies and procedures to ensure that –

(a) Children participating in early-intervention programs assisted under Part C of the Act, and who will participate in preschool programs assisted under Part B of the Act, experience a smooth and effective transition to those preschool programs in a manner consistent with section 637(a)(8) of the Act;

(b) By the third birthday of a child described in paragraph (a) of this section, an IEP or, if consistent with §300.342(c) and section 636(d) of the Act, an IFSP, has been developed and is being implemented for the child consistent with §300.121(c); and

(c) Each LEA will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the designated lead agency under section 637(a)(8) of the Act.

§300.135 Comprehensive system of personnel development.

(a) General. The State must have in effect, consistent with the purposes of this part and with section 635(a)(8) of the Act, a comprehensive system of personnel development that-

(1) Is designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified special education, regular education, and related services personnel; and

(2) Meets the requirements for a State improvement plan relating to personnel development in section 653(b)(2)(B) and (c)(3)(D) of the Act....

§300.136 Personnel standards.

(a) Definitions. As used in this part –

(1) Appropriate professional requirements in the State means entry level requirements that –

(i) Are based on the highest requirements in the State applicable to the profession or discipline in which a person is providing special education or related services; and

(ii) Establish suitable qualifications for personnel providing special education and related services under Part B of the Act to children with disabilities who are served by State, local, and private agencies (see §300.2);...

(b) Policies and procedures....

(2) Each State may –

(i) Determine the specific occupational categories required to provide special education and related services within the State; and

(ii) Revise or expand those categories as needed.

(c) Steps for retraining or hiring personnel. To the extent that a State's standards for a profession or discipline, including standards for temporary or emergency certification, are not based on the highest requirements in the State applicable to a specific profession or discipline, the State must provide the steps the State is taking and the procedures for notifying public agencies and personnel of those steps and the timelines it has established for the retraining or hiring of personnel to meet appropriate professional requirements in the State.

(g) Policy to address shortage of personnel.

(1) In implementing this section, a State may adopt a policy that includes a requirement that LEAs in the State make an ongoing good faith effort to recruit and hire appropriately and adequately trained personnel to provide special education and related services to children with disabilities, including, in a geographic area of the State where there is a shortage of personnel that meet these qualifications, the most qualified individuals available who are making satisfactory progress toward completing applicable course work necessary to meet the standards described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, consistent with State law and the steps described in paragraph (c) of this section, within three years....

§300.137 Performance goals and indicators.

The State must have on file with the Secretary information to demonstrate that the State –

(a) Has established goals for the performance of children with disabilities in the State that –

(1) Will promote the purposes of this part, as stated in §300.1; and

(2) Are consistent, to the maximum extent appropriate, with other goals and standards for all children established by the State;...

§300.138 Participation in assessments.

The State must have on file with the Secretary information to demonstrate that –

(a) Children with disabilities are included in general State and district-wide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations and modifications in administration, if necessary;

(b) As appropriate, the State or LEA –

(1) Develops guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for those children who cannot participate in State and district-wide assessment programs;

(2) Develops alternate assessments in accordance with paragraph (b)(1) of this section; and

(3) Beginning not later than, July 1, 2000, conducts the alternate assessments described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section.

§300.139 Reports relating to assessments.

(a) General. In implementing the requirements of §300.138, the SEA shall make available to the public, and report to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children, the following information:

(1) The number of children with disabilities participating –

(i) In regular assessments; and

(ii) In alternate assessments.

(2) The performance results of the children described in paragraph (a)(1) of this section if doing so would be statistically sound and would not result in the disclosure of performance results identifiable to individual children –

(i) On regular assessments (beginning not later than July 1, 1998); and

(ii) On alternate assessments (not later than July 1, 2000).

§300.234 Schoolwide programs under title I of the ESEA.

(a) General; limitation on amount of Part B funds used. An LEA may use funds received under Part B of the Act for any fiscal year to carry out a schoolwide program under section 1114 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, except that the amount used in any schoolwide program may not exceed –

(1)(i) The amount received by the LEA under Part B for that fiscal year; divided by

(ii) The number of children with disabilities in the jurisdiction of the LEA; and multiplied by

(2) The number of children with disabilities participating in the schoolwide program.

(b) Funding conditions. The funds described in paragraph (a) of this section are subject to the following conditions:

(1) The funds must be considered as Federal Part B funds for purposes of the calculations required by §300.230(b) and (c).

(2) The funds may be used without regard to the requirements of §300.230(a).

(c) Meeting other Part B requirements. Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, all other requirements of Part B must be met by an LEA using Part B funds in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section, including ensuring that children with disabilities in schoolwide program schools –

(1) Receive services in accordance with a properly developed IEP; and

(2) Are afforded all of the rights and services guaranteed to children with disabilities under the IDEA.

§300.303 Proper functioning of hearing aids.

Each public agency shall ensure that the hearing aids worn in school by children with hearing impairments, including deafness, are functioning properly.

§300.305 Program options.

Each public agency shall take steps to ensure that its children with disabilities have available to them the variety of educational programs and services available to nondisabled children in the area served by the agency, including art, music, industrial arts, consumer and homemaking education, and vocational education.

§300.306 Nonacademic services.

(a) Each public agency shall take steps to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities.

(b) Nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities may include counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by the public agency, referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities, and employment of students, including both employment by the public agency and assistance in making outside employment available.

§300.308 Assistive technology.

(a) Each public agency shall ensure that assistive technology devices or assistive technology services, or both, as those terms are defined in §§300.5-300.6, are made available to a child with a disability if required as a part of the child's –

(1) Special education under §300.26;

(2) Related services under §300.24; or

(3) Supplementary aids and services under §§300.28 and 300.550(b)(2).

(b) On a case-by-case basis, the use of school-purchased assistive technology devices in a child's home or in other settings is required if the child's IEP team determines that the child needs access to those devices in order to receive FAPE.

§300.343 IEP meetings.

(i) General. Each public agency is responsible for initiating and conducting meetings for the purpose of developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP of a child with a disability (or, if consistent with §300.342(c), an IFSP).

(c) Review and revision of IEPs. Each public agency shall ensure that the IEP team –

(1) Reviews the child's IEP periodically, but not less than annually, to determine whether the annual goals for the child are being achieved; and

(2) Revises the IEP as appropriate to address –

(i) Any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals described in §300.347(a), and in the general curriculum, if appropriate;

(ii) The results of any reevaluation conducted under §300.536;

(iii) Information about the child provided to, or by, the parents, as described in §300.533(a)(1);

(iv) The child's anticipated needs; or

(v) Other matters.

§300.344 IEP team.

(a) General. The public agency shall ensure that the IEP team for each child with a disability includes –

(1) The parents of the child;

(2) At least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment);

(3) At least one special education teacher of the child, or if appropriate, at least one special education provider of the child;

(4) A representative of the public agency who –

(i) Is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;

(ii) Is knowledgeable about the general curriculum; and

(iii) Is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency;

(5) An individual who can interpret the instructional im-

plications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described in paragraphs (a)(2) through (6) of this section;

(6) At the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate; and

(7) If appropriate, the child....

§300.345 Parent participation.

(a) Public agency responsibility-general. Each public agency shall take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of a child with a disability are present at each IEP meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate, including –

(1) Notifying parents of the meeting early enough to ensure that they will have an opportunity to attend; and

(2) Scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed on time and place....

(c) Other methods to ensure parent participation. If neither parent can attend, the public agency shall use other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls.

(d) Conducting an IEP meeting without a parent in attendance. A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the public agency is unable to convince the parents that they should attend. In this case the public agency must have a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place, such as –

(1) Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls;

(2) Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received; and

(3) Detailed records of visits made to the parent's home or place of employment and the results of those visits....

§300.346 Development, review, and revision of IEP.

(a) Development of IEP....

(2) Consideration of special factors. The IEP team also shall –

(i) In the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, if appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address that behavior;

(ii) In the case of a child with limited English proficiency, consider the language needs of the child as those needs relate to the child's IEP;

(iii) In the case of a child who is blind or visually impaired, provide for instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the IEP team determines, after an evaluation of the child's reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the child's future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille), that instruction in Braille or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the child;...

(v) Consider whether the child requires assistive technology devices and services....

(d) Requirement with respect to regular education teacher. The regular education teacher of a child with a disability, as a member of the IEP team, must, to the extent appropriate, participate in the development, review, and revision of the child's IEP, including assisting in the determination of –

(1) Appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies for the child; and

(2) Supplementary aids and services, program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child, consistent with §300.347(a)(3)....

§300.347 Content of IEP.

(a) General. The IEP for each child with a disability must include –

(1) A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance, including –

(i) How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children); or

(ii) For preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities;

(2) A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to –

(i) Meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children), or for preschool children, as appropriate, to participate in appropriate activities; and

(ii) Meeting each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability;

(3) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child –

(i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;

(ii) To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and

(iii) To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children in the activities described in this section;

(4) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and in the activities described in paragraph (a)(3) of this section;

(5)(i) A statement of any individual modifications in the administration of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in the assessment; and

(ii) If the IEP team determines that the child will not participate in a particular State or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of an assessment), a statement of –

(A) Why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and

(B) How the child will be assessed;

(6) The projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications described in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications; and

(7) A statement of –

(i) How the child's progress toward the annual goals described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section will be measured; and

(ii) How the child's parents will be regularly informed (through such means as periodic report cards), at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled children's progress, of –

(A) Their child's progress toward the annual goals; and

(B) The extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year.

(b) Transition services. The IEP must include –

(1) For each student with a disability beginning at age 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), and updated annually, a statement of the transi-

tion service needs of the student under the applicable components of the student's IEP that focuses on the student's courses of study (such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program); and

(2) For each student beginning at age 16 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), a statement of needed transition services for the student, including, if appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages....

§300.350 IEP – accountability.

(a) Provision of services. Subject to paragraph (b) of this section, each public agency must –

(1) Provide special education and related services to a child with a disability in accordance with the child's IEP; and

(2) Make a good faith effort to assist the child to achieve the goals and objectives or benchmarks listed in the IEP...

§300.382 Improvement strategies.

Each State must describe the strategies the State will use to address the needs identified under §300.381. These strategies must include how the State will address the identified needs for in-service and pre-service preparation to ensure that all personnel who work with children with disabilities (including both professional and paraprofessional personnel who provide special education, general education, related services, or early intervention services) have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of children with disabilities....

§300.501 Opportunity to examine records; parent participation in meetings.

(a) General. The parents of a child with a disability must be afforded, in accordance with the procedures of §§300.562- 300.569, an opportunity to –...

(b) Parent participation in meetings.

(1) Each public agency shall provide notice consistent with §300.345(a)(1) and (b)(1) to ensure that parents of children with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in meetings described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(2) A meeting does not include informal or unscheduled conversations involving public agency personnel and conversations on issues such as teaching methodology, lesson plans, or coordination of service provision if those issues are not addressed in the child's IEP. A meeting also does not include preparatory activities that public agency personnel engage in to develop a proposal or response to a parent proposal that will be discussed at a later meeting.

(c) Parent involvement in placement decisions.

(1) Each public agency shall ensure that the parents of each child with a disability are members of any group that makes decisions on the educational placement of their child.

(2) In implementing the requirements of paragraph (c)(1) of this section, the public agency shall use procedures consistent with the procedures described in §300.345(a) through (b)(1).

(3) If neither parent can participate in a meeting in which a decision is to be made relating to the educational placement of their child, the public agency shall use other

methods to ensure their participation, including individual or conference telephone calls, or video conferencing....

§300.502 Independent educational evaluation.

(a) General.

(1) The parents of a child with a disability have the right under this part to obtain an independent educational evaluation of the child, subject to paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section.

(2) Each public agency shall provide to parents, upon request for an independent educational evaluation, information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained, and the agency criteria applicable for independent educational evaluations as set forth in paragraph (e) of this section....

§300.503 Prior notice by the public agency; content of notice.

(a) Notice.

(1) Written notice that meets the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section must be given to the parents of a child with a disability a reasonable time before the public agency –

(i) Proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of FAPE to the child; or

(ii) Refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of FAPE to the child...

§300.505 Parental consent.

(a) General.

(1) Subject to paragraphs (a)(3), (b) and (c) of this section, informed parent consent must be obtained before –

(i) Conducting an initial evaluation or reevaluation; and

(ii) Initial provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability....

§300.520 Authority of school personnel.

(b)(1) Either before or not later than 10 business days after either first removing the child for more than 10 school days in a school year or commencing a removal that constitutes a change of placement under §300.519, including the action described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section –

(i) If the LEA did not conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child before the behavior that resulted in the removal described in paragraph (a) of this section, the agency shall convene an IEP meeting to develop an assessment plan.

(ii) If the child already has a behavioral intervention plan, the IEP team shall meet to review the plan and its implementation, and, modify the plan and its implementation as necessary, to address the behavior....

§300.522 Determination of setting.

(a) General. The interim alternative educational setting referred to in §300.520(a)(2) must be determined by the IEP team.

(b) Additional requirements. Any interim alternative educational setting in which a child is placed under §§300.520(a)(2) or 300.521 must –

(1) Be selected so as to enable the child to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to receive those services and modifications, including those described in the child's current IEP, that will enable the child to meet the goals set out in that IEP; and

(2) Include services and modifications to address the behavior described in §§300.520(a)(2) or 300.521, that are designed to prevent the behavior from recurring.

§300.525 Parent appeal.

(a) General.

(1) If the child's parent disagrees with a determination that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of the child's disability or with any decision regarding placement under §§300.520-300.528, the parent may request a hearing.

(2) The State or local educational agency shall arrange for an expedited hearing in any case described in paragraph (a)(1) of this section if a hearing is requested by a parent....

§300.526 Placement during appeals.

(a) General. If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal regarding a disciplinary action described in §§300.520(a)(2) or 300.521 to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination, the child must remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in §§300.520(a)(2) or 300.521, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the State agency or local educational agency agree otherwise.

(b) Current placement. If a child is placed in an interim alternative educational setting pursuant to §§300.520(a)(2) or 300.521 and school personnel propose to change the child's placement after expiration of the interim alternative placement, during the pendency of any proceeding to challenge the proposed change in placement the child must remain in the current placement (the child's placement prior to the interim alternative educational setting), except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section....

§300.532 Evaluation procedures.

Each public agency shall ensure, at a minimum, that the following requirements are met:...

(b) A variety of assessment tools and strategies are used to gather relevant functional and developmental information about the child, including information provided by the parent, and information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (or for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities), that may assist in determining –

(1) Whether the child is a child with a disability under §300.7; and

(2) The content of the child's IEP....

(f) No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child.

(g) The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities.

(h) In evaluating each child with a disability under §§300.531-300.536, the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified....

(j) The public agency uses assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child.

§300.533 Determination of needed evaluation data.

a) Review of existing evaluation data. As part of an initial evaluation (if appropriate) and as part of any reevaluation under Part B of the Act, a group that includes the individuals described in §300.344, and other qualified professionals, as appropriate, shall –

(2) On the basis of that review, and input from the child's parents, identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine -

(iv) Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the child to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the IEP of the child and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum....

§300.550 General LRE requirements.

(b) Each public agency shall ensure –

(1) That to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and

(2) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

§300.552 Placements.

In determining the educational placement of a child with a disability, including a preschool child with a disability, each public agency shall ensure that-...

(e) A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum.

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